

# GOV. BLEASE OF SOUTH CAROLINA CENTER OF STORMY POLITICAL FIGHT THAT SHAKES STATE

Picturesque Successor to Ben Tillman Charged with Deep Corruption

COLUMBIA, S. C., Aug. 2.—Not since Ben Tillman twenty years ago was marshalling the "hill billies" and the "wool hat boys" for a victorious assault on the aristocratic regime which had ruled the State ever since it was a colony has South Carolina undergone such a stormy political campaign as is now being fought for the Democratic nomination for Governor. Gov. Coleman L. Blease, who is closing his first term, is a candidate for renomination, which of course is equivalent to an election, and he is opposed by Judge Ira B. Jones, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, who resigned from the bench for the express purpose of saving the State from what Judge Jones calls the "disgrace of Bleasism." Jones claims that he does not want to be Governor, but is making the race solely for the purpose of ridding South Carolina of the most scandalous administration since the era of reconstruction that followed the civil war.

Bleas and Jones are stumping the State and are denouncing each other in terms that continually threaten to result in a personal encounter. Blease has the advantage of Jones when it comes to the bandying of epithets, and several times has so enraged the Judge that the latter has tried to resort to physical weapons, but so far the peace officers have succeeded in preventing blows or shots.

**Fights at Debates.**

But while Blease and Jones have been kept from fighting so far, it has been found impossible to restrain their partisans, and two men have been shot and several badly beaten up as a result of moles that have occurred at joint debates.

Bleas is a product of the old dispensary system which was fostered upon South Carolina by Ben Tillman when he was Governor and which has been more prolific of scandal and graft in a few years than all the other barrooms that have existed since the colony of South Carolina was founded.

As a member of the Legislature Blease was hand in glove with the commission which ran the dispensary system and it is charged that he shared the rich rebates which the wholesale liquor houses were forced to pay to members of the commission on purchases of liquor for the dispensary.

**Dispensary Scandal.**

The dispensary scandal became notorious that the State decided to abolish the commission and go out of the liquor business. In winding up the affairs of the dispensary the evidence of corruption was so apparent that the State entered suit to recover from wholesale liquor houses in various cities large sums alleged to have been paid as rebates. Thomas R. Felder, a prominent attorney of Atlanta, was employed by South Carolina to prosecute the suits and he succeeded in recovering large amounts for the State.

Incidentally Felder, who took the suits on a contingent basis, raked off nearly \$150,000 for himself.

In all these suits the name of Blease then a State Senator, Hub Evans and

other men who had been prominent members of the Tillman faction figured. It was charged that all of them had grafted while the dispensary system was in force. Several criminal prosecutions were brought against the alleged grafters, but no one was convicted.

It is difficult to get juries to convict in South Carolina in any case where liquor is involved.

**Whooped 'Er Up.**

In spite of these revelations Blease ran for Governor two years ago, and he won, although he was opposed by every newspaper in the State but two and the charges against him were pondered everywhere. Blease won by whooping up the hillbillies and making the "wool hat boys" believe that the "aristocrats" of South Carolina hated him because he was the "friend of the common people."

After Blease was inaugurated as Governor he started out to punish his enemies and reward his friends, and also, it is charged, to make the office a source of revenue.

At the outset of his administration he began issuing pardons on a scale never before known in the South.

More than 400 pardons stand above his signature up to date, and he has warned the State constituency that he will not stop issuing pardons upon the same scale as long as he is Governor. It is charged that Blease received large sums for many of the pardons which he issued.

**Detective Burns Called In.**

In casting about for enemies to punish Blease selected Attorney T. B. Felder of Atlanta, who had represented South Carolina in winding up the affairs of the dispensary commission and had recovered large sums for the State. Felder found the trail of Blease in his investigations and had charged that the Governor while State Senator was hand in glove with the liquor grafters. Blease had warrants sworn out in South Carolina against Felder and tried to extradite him, but the Governor of Georgia refused to honor Blease's requisition. To protect himself Felder hired Detective William J. Burns and told him to "get Blease."

The scandals about Blease as Governor became so notorious that the Legislature appointed a committee to probe the alleged sale of pardons and grafting on "blind tigers." The committee heard many witnesses, but did not strike much "pay dirt" until it went to Augusta, Ga., recently to hear the evidence about Gov. Blease, which Detective Burns had gathered for Attorney Felder. Burns and his men offered the committee a mass of evidence to show that Blease as Governor conducted a pardon brokerage business, accepted "protection" money from the blind tigers and signed or vetoed railroad legislation which came before him for consideration. Attorney Samuel J. Nicholls of Spartanburg, S. C., was named as the agent of Gov. Blease in these transactions. Burns had used the dictagraph on Nicholls and the records of this instrument were read to the committee.

Gov. Blease promptly denounced the evidence as perjured. Nicholls admitted that he had dealt with Burns' men, but said that he was drunk, and

"Hillbillies" and "Wool Hats" Gather To His Support at Election

that the dictagraph records were the vapors of an intoxicated man.

**Bleas Impudent.**

Many thought that the revelations would put Blease out of the running for a second term and make victory certain for Judge Jones. But they reckoned without the impudence of Blease. He is turning the revelations to account by proclaiming from every stump that they are lies told by "aristocrats" to discredit the man whom the "common people" elected Governor. Some shrewd politicians are inclined to think that Blease has profited by the attacks on him.

As to the character of campaigning Blease is doing, his speech here recently is a typical example. He addressed a conglomerate audience from the State House steps. The crowd was drawn very largely by the expectation that he would denounce T. B. Felder, William J. Burns and others behind the charges of corruption recently made against him. But he deliberately avoided them, except to declare that "the subject of Tom Felder is too indecent to discuss before ladies."

Attacking the cotton mill interests in the State, Blease declared that he would pay the fine or pardon any cotton mill worker who whips any man threatening him about his vote.

**Sample of His Speech.**

This is the way Blease attacks his political enemies:

"If John Graham, who operates that mill [referring to the hosiery mill in the State penitentiary] were to die tonight there is not enough coal in all the Clinchfield mine for the devil to put on his dead body."

"That mill, operated by a Yankee, who walks about the streets in Columbia, drinking his fine liquors, is an incubator of tuberculosis and a disgrace to civilization."

Bleas's style of campaigning is undoubtedly effective. It is patterned on the "pitchfork method" made famous by Ben Tillman and is popular with the electorate of South Carolina. Blease says that he will defeat Jones in the primary of August 21, and many fear that his prediction will prove true.

Bleas's paramount political principle, according to his own version, is to "stand by his friends." He has made that principle of "sticking by my friends at any cost" the cry of his political campaign.

Bleas from the beginning of his career has mixed politics with his practice of the law. That is why Judge Jones is charging on the stump that Blease, elected Governor of South Carolina, pardoned his old client, Wash Hunter, whom, as lawyer, he could not acquit of a manslaughter charge. That is why he is now being charged with representing as State Senator the liquor interests in the dispensary graft while his law partner, Dominick, openly represented them as their lawyer.

**Stormy Career.**

As a South Carolina legislator Blease had a stormy career. He told

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the people frankly that he was not a prohibitionist, but he introduced a prohibition bill and saw it passed after the prohibition element had elected him. Then he went over to the dispensary system. Judge Jones charges that as a member of that dispensary purchasing committee his whole career was lined with distillery graft and that that graft is still going on.

Since he has been State executive he has been continually warring with his department heads. All of them he has told in effect that he was going to run South Carolina and that he must be consulted in every act by every State head, from the commissioner of agriculture to the Attorney General.

**Ostracized Socially.**

Socially he has been virtually ostracized and since he has been Governor the ancient functions which have graced the capital city of the State for years have been invariably without the presence of either the Governor or his wife. Mrs. Blease, who was a Miss Lillian Simmons, of an old South Carolina family, is a charming woman, and she is said to feel most keenly the social ostracism visited upon the Governor.

Bleas is a native of Newberry, S. C. He came of good parentage, and though he was a bit bombastic in the schools there and used to bully some of the smaller boys, nobody ever thought anything about it and nothing serious cropped out in his youth's career until he was just about to graduate from the South Carolina university.

He was a prominent student and was a leader in the university debating societies. When about to graduate Blease was a competitor in an oratorical contest. He delivered a great oration and was awarded first prize. They gave him a gold medal amid great cheering, but it was afterward proved that the wonderful oration Blease had spoken was not Blease's at all, but had been almost bodily stolen from a speech by one of the most gifted statesmen in America. Blease was expelled from the university and with that scandal hanging over him began to practise law and politics.

**Bleas a Popular Campaigner.**

Bleas wears the long frock coat and the wide slouch hat of the near statesman and the high standing collar of the vintage of 1886.

He takes a drink with anybody who comes along and upon visits to the small towns he will strike an attitude in front of the village hotel and entertain a semi-circle of idlers with loquacious answers to all the questions that may be asked him, barring none, replete with profane and abusive references to people who have criticised or opposed him.

**RUBBER GROWING IN FEDERATED MALAY STATES.**

It appears from the report of the Director of Agriculture that the land opened for rubber in the Federated Malay States during 1911 reached the enormous total of 107,200 acres, which is more than double that opened during 1910. The largest increase was in Perak, with 40,791 acres. The rubber output for 1911 was 1,809,617 pounds, an increase of about 75 per cent over 1910. Had it not been for the drought there is every reason to suppose that the 1910 output would have been doubled. The acreage producing in the Federated Malay States at the end of the year gives an approximate yield per acre of 200 pounds. The acreage producing this was 105,633.—Consular Reports.

### WORLD'S SUPPLY CORN OVER FOUR BILLION BUSHELS

NEW YORK, Aug. 5.—A good corn crop nowadays for the leading producing countries of the globe is at least 4,000,000,000 bushels. The yield of 1910 was 27,000,000 bushels greater. A poor corn crop would run near to a 3,000,000,000 bushel yield. In 1907 the world's corn growing countries came within 420,000,000 bushels of that minimum. The brunt of producing corn falls very largely upon the United States. The average production of commercial countries for the five years ending with 1910 was 3,913,000,000 bushels. The average production of the United States was 2,725,000,000, so that the latter country produced about 70 per cent of the world's yield.

North America including Mexico and Canada produces fully three-quarters of the world's corn production. This year from present prospects the United States may alone have a crop of 75 per cent of the world's total. Last year was Argentina's turn for an enormous yield. That country and Austria Hungary are about on a par as producers, each contributing something less than 200,000,000 bushels.

Mexico belongs in the same class with Argentina and Austria-Hungary, followed by Italy and Roumania with about half as large an output. All of these countries are exporters whose surplus generally goes to western Europe. For several years Argentina has been the leading exporter of corn, finding the market in lean years in such American countries as Mexico and occasionally in the United States.

Approximately only one-third of our own corn crop is shipped out of the country in which grown. We feed it so largely to horses and cattle that only when prices are high or crops big do the sales off of the farm run as high as 100,000,000 bushels, or one bushel out of every 30 grown. Meat production of the American farmers' great corn mill. A big crop this year of 3,000,000,000 may insure large exports. But Argentina's large yield now being marketed will tend to check demand for our own corn abroad. The lower price will insure its consumption freely on the farm.

**STAMP-AFFIXING MACHINE.**

Among some of the more notable exhibits, other than American, at the recent Business Efficiency exhibition in London was a stamp-affixing machine. This is a British invention and of British manufacture. A reel of stamps is placed in the stamp retainer, which is then locked. The machine is placed on the envelope or wrapper. By the single operation of pressing down the lever a stamp is detached, wetted, affixed, and registered. In appearance it is not unlike a numbering or "plunger" dating machine. It is stated that when once the stamps are locked into the machine any attempt at surreptitious abstraction mutilates the stamps, while the automatic registering of the stamps, the number used being always visible on the indicator, is another safeguard. From 4000 to 5000 stamps can be affixed per hour. According to information received, this machine is in use in many of the largest business houses, being employed in banks by manufacturers, railroad companies, etc.—Consular Reports.

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### TREND OF GERMAN EMIGRATION

It has been asserted that in the first half year of 1912 the number of emigrants both via Bremen and Hamburg showed a considerable increase. But it ought to be remembered that emigration over German sea ports does not mean an emigration of German subjects. By far the largest part of the emigrants embarking at Bremen or Hamburg are of foreign nationality, more especially Austro-Hungarians or Russians. If we look at the figures of Germans emigrating we find, as in the previous years, rather a tendency of diminishing. Thus there were only 22,600 German emigrants in the whole year of 1911, against 25,500 in 1910, or in other words there was a decrease of nearly 12 per cent. The maximum of German emigrants in the last ten years was below 30,000, the minimum (in 1908) about 20,000. But even the maximum figure of 30,000 is by no means discomforting for a country that has an annual increase of population to the tune of 900,000. As a matter of fact, the loss to the German empire by emigration is nil, as there is numerically larger immigration into the Empire. This numerical surplus would be far greater still, if the German Government would not put a brake to the immigration of workmen from Russia and Galicia.

As usual, the bulk of the German emigrants winds its way to the United States. They are mostly attracted to some particular spot where they have relatives and friends; for the large emigration of the last century, especially from 1873 to 1889 has left the effect that there are millions of Germans in the United States. But it is remarkable that among the young people who wish to emigrate from Germany, the interest in South America is steadily growing. The

bureau for giving information to emigrants reports that inquiries about the Argentine Republic are in the increase and that particulars about the conditions of life in Brazil are also very often asked for. There can be no doubt that the political consolidation of those countries has made them more attractive for the more intelligent and independent class of German emigrants.—Continental Correspondence.

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"I guess not; he's like an hour-glass."

"How's that?"

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